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comments and recommendations shall be the subject of separate communication. Additionally, in Military Whistleblower Protection Act cases, any recommendation by the Board to the Secretary that disciplinary or administrative action be taken against any Navy official based on the Board's determination that the official took reprisal action against the applicant will not be made part of the Board's record of proceedings or furnished the applicant but will be transmitted to the Secretary as a separate communication.

(b) *Minority report.* In case of a disagreement between members of the Board a minority report will be submitted, either as to the findings, conclusions or recommendation, including the reasons therefor.

(c) *Record of proceedings.* Following a hearing, or where the Board determines to recommend that the record be corrected without a hearing, a record of proceedings will be prepared. Such record shall indicate whether or not a quorum was present, and the name and vote of each member present. The record shall include the application for relief, a verbatim transcript of any testimony, affidavits, papers and documents considered by the Board, briefs and written arguments, advisory opinions, if any, minority reports, if any, the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Board, where appropriate, and all other papers, documents, and reports necessary to reflect a true and complete history of the proceedings.

(d) *Withdrawal.* The Board may permit an applicant to withdraw his/her application without prejudice at any time before its record of proceedings is forwarded to the Secretary.

(e) *Delegation of authority to correct certain naval records.* (1) With respect to all petitions for relief properly before it, the Board is authorized to take final corrective action on behalf of the Secretary, unless:

(i) Comments by proper naval authority are inconsistent with the Board's recommendation;

(ii) The Board's recommendation is not unanimous; or

(iii) It is in the category of petitions reserved for decision by the Secretary of the Navy.

(2) The following categories of petitions for relief are reserved for decision by the Secretary of the Navy:

(i) Petitions involving records previously reviewed or acted upon by the Secretary wherein the operative facts remained substantially the same;

(ii) Petitions by former commissioned officers or midshipmen to change the character of, and/or the reason for, their discharge; or,

(iii) Such other petitions as, in the determination of Office of the Secretary or the Executive Director, warrant Secretarial review.

(3) The Executive Director after ensuring compliance with this section, will announce final decisions on applications decided under this section.

§ 723.7 Action by the Secretary.

(a) *General.* The record of proceedings, except in cases finalized by the Board under the authority delegated in § 723.6(e), and those denied by the Board without a hearing, will be forwarded to the Secretary who will direct such action as he or she determines to be appropriate, which may include the return of the record to the Board for further consideration. Those cases returned for further consideration shall be accompanied by a brief statement setting out the reasons for such action along with any specific instructions. If the Secretary's decision is to deny relief, such decision shall be in writing and, unless he or she expressly adopts in whole or in part the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Board, or a minority report, shall include a brief statement of the grounds for denial. See § 723.3(e)(4).

(b) *Military Whistleblower Protection Act.* The Secretary will ensure that decisions in cases involving the Military Whistleblower Protection Act are issued 180 days after receipt of the case and will, unless the full relief requested is granted, inform applicants of their right to request review of the decision by the Secretary of Defense. Applicants will also be informed:

(1) Of the name and address of the official to whom the request for review must be submitted.

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(2) That the request for review must be submitted within 90 days after receipt of the decision by the Secretary of the Navy.

(3) That the request for review must be in writing and include:

(i) The applicant's name, address and telephone number;

(ii) A copy of the application to the Board and the final decision of the Secretary of the Navy; and

(iii) A statement of the specific reasons the applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the Secretary of the Navy.

(4) That the request must be based on the Board record; request for review based on factual allegations or evidence not previously presented to the Board will not be considered under this paragraph but may be the basis for reconsideration by the Board under § 723.9.

§ 723.8 Staff action.

(a) *Transmittal of final decisions granting relief.* (1) If the final decision of the Secretary is to grant the applicant's request for relief the record of proceedings shall be returned to the Board for disposition. The Board shall transmit the finalized record of proceedings to proper naval authority for appropriate action. Similarly final decisions of the Board granting the applicant's request for relief under the authority delegated in § 723.6(e), shall also be forwarded to the proper naval authority for appropriate action.

(2) The Board shall transmit a copy of the record of proceedings to the proper naval authority for filing in the applicant's service record except where the effect of such action would be to nullify the relief granted. In such cases no reference to the Board's decision shall be made in the service record or files of the applicant and all copies of the record of proceedings and any related papers shall be forwarded to the Board and retained in a file maintained for this purpose.

(3) The addressees of such decisions shall report compliance therewith to the Executive Director.

(4) Upon receipt of the record of proceedings after final action by the Secretary, or by the Board acting under the authority contained in § 723.6(e),

the Board shall communicate the decision to the applicant. The applicant is entitled, upon request, to receive a copy of the Board's findings, conclusions and recommendations.

(b) *Transmittal of final decisions denying relief.* If the final decision of the Secretary or the Board is to deny relief, the following materials will be made available to the applicant:

(1) A statement of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations made by the Board and the reasons therefor;

(2) Any advisory opinions considered by the Board;

(3) Any minority reports; and

(4) Any material prepared by the Secretary as required in § 723.7. Moreover, applicant shall also be informed that the name and final vote of each Board member will be furnished or made available upon request and that he/she may submit new and material evidence or other matter for further consideration.

§ 723.9 Reconsideration.

After final adjudication, further consideration will be granted only upon presentation by the applicant of new and material evidence or other matter not previously considered by the Board. New evidence is defined as evidence not previously considered by the Board and not reasonably available to the applicant at the time of the previous application. Evidence is material if it is likely to have a substantial effect on the outcome. All requests for further consideration will be initially screened by the Executive Director of the Board to determine whether new and material evidence or other matter (including, but not limited to, any factual allegations or arguments why the relief should be granted) has been submitted by the applicant. If such evidence or other matter has been submitted, the request shall be forwarded to the Board for a decision. If no such evidence or other matter has been submitted, the applicant will be informed that his/her request was not considered by the Board because it did not contain new and material evidence or other matter.